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New Tapes Show Nixon To 'Stonewall It, Plead

WASHINGTON (AP) — As the Senate Watergate hearings were gearing up last year, new tape transcripts show, an adamant President Nixon said that his aides all should "stonewall it, let them plead the Fifth Amendment, cover-up or anything else."

The Nixon order was disclosed for the first time Tuesday as the House Judiciary Committee issued its version of eight of the presidential conversations made public in April by the White House.

The House transcripts restored the phrase "expletive deleted" and many of the inaudible portions of the conversations left blank in the presidential version — and included a lengthy discussion that had not been covered at all.

One celebrated passage from the March 21, 1973, presidential conversation was Nixon's discussion of possible hush-money payments to Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt.

In the White House tapes, Nixon's apparent order was to "(expletive deleted) get it." The committee version shows that what the President said was: "Well, for Christ's sake, get it."

White House Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler accused the committee of a "hypoed public relations campaign," saying the congressmen had "chosen a public relations route . . . focusing attention only on one section of the tapes."

Ziegler said the committee should release "the full body of evidence, altogether, all at once and not in piecemeal fashion."

In the newly included conversation, March 22, 1973, Nixon was discussing the forthcoming Ervin committee hearings with counsel John W. Dean III and former Atty. Gen. John N. Mitchell.

They were talking about a "scenario" in which Nixon would offer the committee a report by Dean of Watergate and would urge Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr., to conduct his investigation in closed session.

Nixon said Ervin could be told, "this is everything we know, Mr Senator . . . This is everything we know; I know nothing more . . . if you need any further information, my, our counsel, will furnish it."

The President said he did not want his staff hurt in the Watergate matter, the way Sherman Adams, former top aide to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, was treated in an Eisenhower administration scandal.

"I think he made a, made a mistake, but he shouldn't have been sacked," the President said of Adams' firing "I don't give a shit what happens. I

GOOD MORNING!

When you dig another out of trouble, you've a place to bury your own

—Grit

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Told Aides The Fifth'

want you all to stonewall it, let them plead the Fifth Amendment, cover-up or anything else, if it'll save it — save the plan"

The President then said he would prefer to do it "the other way" — an apparent allusion to his preference that the Senate committee accept the Dean report as the full White House accounting on Watergate

"With the number of jackass people that they've got that they can call the story they get out through leaks, charges and so forth and innuendos, will be a hell of a lot worse than the story they're going to get out by just letting it out there," Nixon added

Ervin commented Tuesday that the stonewall advice reflects how the President planned to deal with the committee

"The plan was to pretend in public to cooperate," he said, "but at the same time to do everything possible to obstruct and impede the committee's investigation"

James D St Clair, the President's impeachment defense lawyer, told newsmen when he emerged from a closed Judiciary Committee session that many of the differences were due to "a view of what is relevant"

Asked about the omission of the long passage pertaining to

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the Watergate committee, St. Clair said:

"I don't believe the relationships with the Senate Select Committee were necessarily relevant. But we furnished the tape to the (House) committee so if they felt it was relevant they could publish it, which

The Judiciary Committee, which has been receiving evidence from its impeachment staff since May 9, made its own transcripts from tapes it had obtained from the White House and a federal grand jury.

While the committee transcripts, worked up from sophisticated electronic equipment, filled in many passages marked unintelligible in the White House trancripts, it was not able to clear up all of them.

Committee chairman Peter J. Rodino Jr., D-N.J., said seven White House transcripts turned over to the Watergate special prosecutor last January "are nearly the same except for minor differences, deletion of expletives," as edited transcripts made public later by the White House.

The House committee issued a 131-page document citing major variations between its own transcripts and the White House version by quoting passages side-by-side.

Rodino said the document "does not reflect all differences between the two sets of transcripts," and added:

"It does not draw any conclusions as to the reasons for, or the signficance of, the differences."

Accompanying the type-

written, triple-spaced parison of passages" was committee's full transcript of the eight tapes, in a 218-p book printed [illegible]

Ro[illegible] Edward [illegible] mittee's se[illegible] designated m[illegible] committee staff [illegible] tapes.

"Congressman Hutchinson and I ... supervised on a day-to day basis" the transcripts preparation, Rodino said in the committee print forword.

"In a few instances," Rodino noted, he and Hutchinson decided "to delete irrelevant material which was considered to be defamatory, degrading or embarrassing." He said the committee was publishing the document, "since President Nixon has chosen to present the White House-edited version of these eight conversations to the public."

President Nixon released on April 30 edited White House transcripts covering 43 taped presidential conversations. The night before, in an address to the nation, he said those transcripts provided all the evidence needed "to get Watergate behind us and to get it behind us now ..."

He added that "as far as the President's role with regard to Watergate is concerned, the entire story is there."

Quickly apparent was the addition of the March 22, 1973, portion which the committee explained doesn't appear in either the White House transcripts, nor in the copies provided by the White House to the special Watergate prosecutor or the committee.

At one point in that conversation, Nixon told Mitchell that "the purpose of this scenario is to clean the presidency ... the main thing is to answer (unintelligible) and that should be a God-damned satisfactory answer, John."

Before that time, the White House had offered statements from various Nixon aides to the committee. Ervin refused the offer, saying, "you can't cross-examine a piece of paper."

Mitchell told Nixon in the March 22 meeting that the White House plan would answer all the complaints the committee had.

President: That's right. They get cross-examination.

Mitchell: Right. They get everything, but the public spectacle.

In the conversation about Sherman Adams, who was forced to resign after disclosures that he had accepted favors from Boston industrialist Bernard Goldfine, Nixon remarked that Eisenhower "only cared about — Christ, 'be sure he was clean.' "

But, Nixon added, "I don't look at it that way. ... we're going to protect our people, if we can."

The House transcripts covered the conversations of Sept. 15, 1972; Feb. 28; March 13; two on March 21; March 22, and two on April 16, all in 1973.

There were several changes in emphasis between the different version of the March 21 discussion of Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt's demand for money.

The White House transcript quoted Nixon as saying Hunt "might blow the whistle and his price is pretty high, but at least we can buy the time on that as I pointed out to John."

According to the committee version, Nixon said Hunt "might, uh, blow the whistle, and he, he — and his price is pretty high, but at least, uh, we should, we should buy the time on that, uh, as I, as I pointed out to John."

Later, the White House transcript quoted Nixon as saying, "Well, it sounds like a lot of money, a million dollars. Let me say that I think we could get that. I know money is hard to raise. But the point is, what we do on that — Let's look at the hard problem —"

The committee transcript has him saying:

"But let's now come back to the money, a million dollars, and so forth and so on. Let me say that I think you could get that in cash and I now money is hard, but there are ways. That could be (unintelligible). But the point is, uh, what would you do on that — let's, let's look at the hard facts."

There was another potentially explosive variance. The House version seems to indicate the President may have ordered aides to "do something" about paying the hush money to Hunt.

The White House quoted the President only as inquiring whether Mitchell or his campaign aide, Frederick C. LaRue, intended to act. The House version leaves open the possibility that Nixon was giving an order, not asking a question.

The conversation took place the afternoon of March 21, 1973, hours before LaRue allegedly delivered $75,000 to Hunt's attorney. The Judiciary Committee's impeachment investigation has sought to determine whether Nixon himself ordered the payment.

According to both the White House version and the committee version, Nixon was told on the morning of March 21 that Hunt was demanding money for support and legal fees and was threatening to reveal embarrassing information about the White House.

According to both versions, Nixon said, "get it."

In a second meeting the same day, the subject of Hunt's demand for money came up again.

The White House gave this account of an exchange between Nixon and Dean:

Nixon: "... What do you do about Hunt and his present finance? What do we do about that?"

Dean: "Well, apparently Mitchell and LaRue are now aware of it so they know how he is feeling."

Nixon: "Sure, are they going to do something?"

Dean: "Well, I have not talked to either of them. Their positions are sympathetic."

The Judiciary Committee transcribed the same tape recording this way:

Nixon: "... What to do you do about his present demand? Now, what, what, uh, what (unintelligible) about that?"

Dean: "Well, apparently Mitchell and, and, uh, uh—"

Unidentified: "LaRue."

Dean: "LaRue are now aware of it, so they know what he is feeling."

Nixon: "True. (Unintelligible) do something."

Dean: "I, I have, I have not talked with them either, I think they are in a position to do something, though."

The House version of March 21 also had Nixon saying the proposed hush-money payment to Hunt was "worth it, at the moment" — a reference not on the White House transcript.

Nixon went on television April 29 to announce that he would release the edited transcripts the following day. It was his response to a Judiciary Committee subpoena demanding tapes of 42 conversations.

"They include all the relevant portions of all the subpoenaed conversations that were recorded," the President told the nation, "all portions that relate to the question of what I knew about Watergate or the cover-up, and what I did about it."

On April 30, the transcripts, three inches thick and containing 1,216 pages, were sold by the Government Printing Office and later reproduced in paperback versions commercially.

KIWNIS SPEAKER

The featured speaker at the weekly meeting of the Kiwanis Club of Suburban Frederick will be Dr. Douglas J. Wear, Lung Association of Mid-Maryland.

Members and guests are invited to attend. The club meets at 6:30 p.m. each Thursday at Erni's Italian Kitchen.

About 14,000 farmers in Alberta, Canada, are involved in milk production.